

Management of Medicines in Care Homes

Summary

The Committee are requested to consider the update provided in relation to the PCT's response to the requirement to co-ordinate the management of medicines in care homes.

Detail

1. Recent research has indicated that nationally there are issues in relation to the dispensation of medicines in care homes. Entitled 'The Care Homes Use of Medicines Study: prevalence, causes and potential harm of medication errors in care homes for older people', the research showed that in a sample of practices in 55 care homes in three areas of England:
 - 'Residents (mean age 85 years) were taking an average of 8 medicines each
 - On any one day 7 out of 10 patients experienced at least one medication error
 - Whilst the mean score for potential harm was relatively low, the results did indicate opportunity for more serious harm.'
2. The Department of Health has therefore written to all Directors of Adult Social Services and PCTs in order to ensure appropriate action is being taken. PCTS and providers were referred to best practice on this matter, and were informed that the Care Quality Commission will be undertaking a review of health care in care homes during 2010.
3. In addition a Department of Health Alert was issued to request PCTs to co-ordinate actions with primary care providers, pharmaceutical services and social care. As previously discussed at the Committee, the chair has therefore requested an update on what action is being taken locally to address this issue.
4. Representatives of NHS Stockton-on-Tees will be in attendance in order to brief the Committee. Attached at **Appendix 1** is an Action Plan that has been produced by the PCT.

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